

COMPONENTS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

All types of relationships from family, friendships, romantic, or work, have four basic components in common: Respect, Honesty, Trust, and Communication. Remember healthy relationships take time to develop, they do not unfold overnight or even in a week, or month. They require an individual's willingness to invest time and emotion and a willingness to change so the relationship can grow.

1. Respect: This means...

- Discover and enjoy what each person has to offer, share, and contribute to the relationship.
- Actively listen to what the other person says and needs, and try to understand their point of view.
- Value the other person's self-worth as an individual and respect what is important to them.
- When respect is not given in a relationship, power becomes out of balance and one partner will dominate the other. Generally the less dominant partner sacrifices autonomy, values, goals, or even other relationships.

2. Honesty: This means...

- Be honest with your partner and yourself
- Each person in the relationship should ask themselves:
 - What are my thoughts and feelings about this relationship?
 - What do I want to happen in this relationship?
 - How do I want it to grow?
- Having a good understanding of your true feelings will help you to share them with your partner
- Healthy relationships work best when both individuals share how they feel and what they desire
- Deceit and manipulation only destroy a relationship



3. Trust

- Trust each other
- Each individual must feel they truly know their partner and are truly respected by their partner
- It also entails feeling confident that your partner will be there for you in times of need as well as joy
- Trust is made through honesty and respect and is built over time. Not only in words, but true in their actions seen overtime. But it may take only one broken promise to completely shatter it

4. Communication

- Communication is the key where each partner demonstrates their respect, honesty and trust to each other
- Communication has two ingredients:
 - 1) Clearly expressing your thoughts, feelings, needs and wishes in a healthy/non-judgmental & non-threatening way and
 - 2) Actively listening to the thoughts, feelings, needs and wishes of your partner
- Through communication, individuals learn about their partner and gain a deeper understanding of each other and as a result this enriches the relationship

continued other side...

What does it mean to be in a romantic (dating) relationship?

Boundaries

- Each person has a right to their own physical and emotional boundaries
- Only "you", not him or her, but "you":
 - Decide what limits you have
 - Set your own boundaries
 - Have a right to have your limits respected
 - Have a responsibility to respect the limits of your partner

Communication

- The best relationships encourage two-way communication
- Only "You":
 - Have the right to speak your mind without fear and to be heard by others
 - Have the responsibility to listen to your partner

Equality

- Both partners have equal share in decision making
- Neither partner is to be used selfishly by the other
- The interests, opinions, and feelings of both partners are shared equally between each other

Self-Esteem

- Your belief in yourself stays strong and often increases as you grow together
- You feel good about yourself and how your partner treats you

When "respect" is not there...

- Boundaries can be ignored and overrun
- Communication can break down
- One person can ignore the wishes and rights of the other and abuse can take place

Being true to ourselves through "Consent"

In a respectful relationship...

- Both people feel safe
- Both people feel appreciated
- Both people are considerate
- Both people are understanding

In a respectful relationship each person feels safe, appreciated, and understood when both people in the relationship express what they are feeling and say what they want and need.

- "Yes"
- "Let's talk it over."
- "I'd like to do that."
- "Do you want to?"
- "I don't want to have sex. I do want to kiss and be close though"

In a respectful relationship consent requires talking together and actively agreeing on the level of sexual intimacy you are both ready for. No bullying, no pushing, no pressure.



*If you feel you are not in a "healthy" relationship, call
Los Angeles County, Department of Mental Health at 1-800-854-7771*